

## 2008 Wild Turkey Brood Survey

In the table below, 2008 results are compared to the average value from the previous year and the 10-year average. On the second page is a map showing survey region boundaries (Fig. 1) and average brood production by region, with the production index (Fig. 2).

Table 1. 2008 Turkey Brood Survey Results (% change from previous year in *italic*, and % change from a 10-year average in **bold**, 1999-08).

REGION	REPORTS	TURKEYS PER FLOCK	YOUNG PER HEN	% HENS WITH BROOD
Northeast	477	9.5    (-7,-7)	4.5    (-12,-5)	55    (+4, +1)
Southern	952	8.7    (+6,-9)	4.5    (0,-8)	48    (+36, +20)
Central	259	8.4    (-13,-6)	4.8    (+4,+7)	54    (-2,+4)
Western	394	9.6    (+3,-19)	4.3    (+5,-9)	54    (+30,+3)
East Central	600	8.0    (-18,-21)	4.1    (-18,-17)	55    (+2,+16)
Northwest	155	9.3    (-22,-7)	4.5    (-18,-14)	68    (+18,+5)
North Central	453	7.8    (-24,-14)	3.9    (-17,-12)	56    (+2,+6)
<b>STATEWIDE</b>	3,289	8.7    (-8,-13)	4.3    (-9,-11)	57    (+19,+14)

Iowa's 2008 summer wild turkey brood survey showed a decrease in reproduction of turkeys throughout the state compared to last year's average and the 10-year average based on poults observed by hen. In 2008, a new survey was developed that asked observers to also record toms seen, distinguishing them from hens. In previous years, observers were only asked to record hens observed. This may have influenced the percent of hens observed with broods (i.e. observers may have recorded toms as turkeys/hens without broods in the past). It is unlikely that all regions increased in the percent of hens observed with broods with the weather conditions of 2008 (extremely wet with severe flooding). Thus, any interpretation on the brood survey should be limited to poults per hen and turkeys per flock this year.

Statewide, the number of young observed per hen was 9% lower than last year, and 11% lower than the 10-year average. This was the second lowest record of young/hen (4.2 in 1976) and just under the 1996 estimates of 4.4 young/hen. Regionally, central and western Iowa were the only regions that experienced increases in reproduction from the previous year and the 10-year average. Southern Iowa had no change in young/hen from last year, but was 8% below the 10-year average. East central, northwest, and north central Iowa appeared to be the hardest impacted regions of the state with a 12%-18% reduction in the number of young observed with hens. Turkeys per flock were also reduced in these regions by 7%-24%.

The reduced reproduction rates were likely related to the amount of rainfall during the nesting season (April-May), which was 2-8 inches above normal across the state with widespread flooding. The wet weather continued during the June hatch with the second wettest June ever recorded in Iowa.

This year's brood survey indicated below average reproduction across the state, but the turkey populations in Iowa are still good, especially when compared to other regions of the U.S. Hunter harvest success rates remaining similar over the past few years. Southern Iowa has experienced average to below average reproduction over the past several years, with the low flock sizes reported the last 4 years, but this region fortunately did not have the reduction in young/hen as much of the rest of the state did.

The information received from the turkey brood survey is essential in order to monitor turkey reproduction in Iowa. We welcome anyone interested in assisting with the survey, and thank all those who have helped in the past. We hope you will all continue to monitor turkey populations throughout Iowa. This information is crucial to successful turkey management in Iowa, and could not be accomplished without everyone's help. We appreciate your continued cooperation and support.

Figure 1. Average number of poults per successful hen observed in Iowa during 2008 for 7 survey regions.

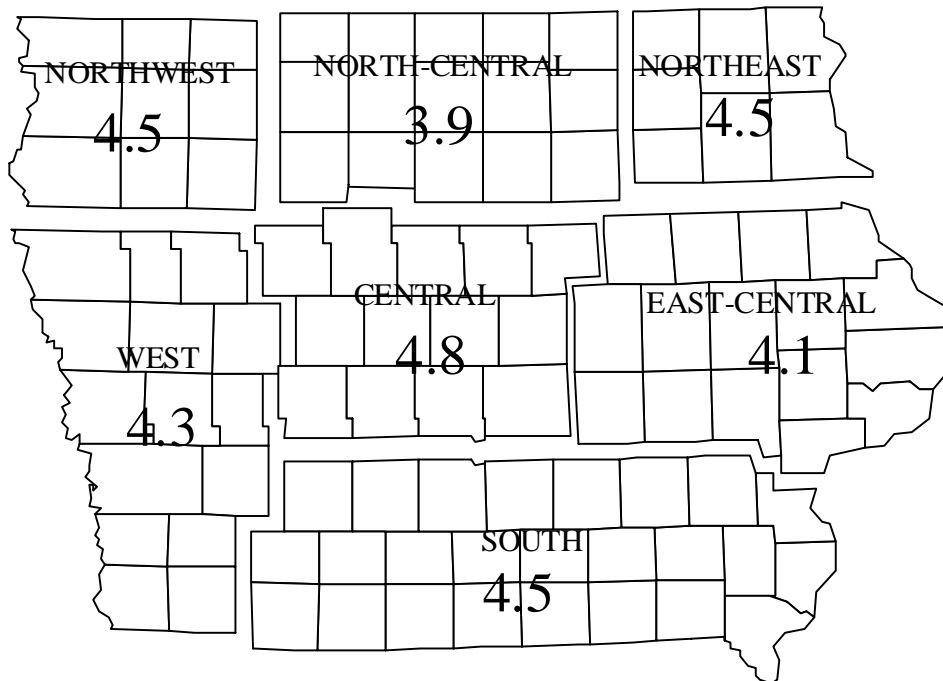


Figure 2. Iowa's wild turkey production index, 1976-2008.

